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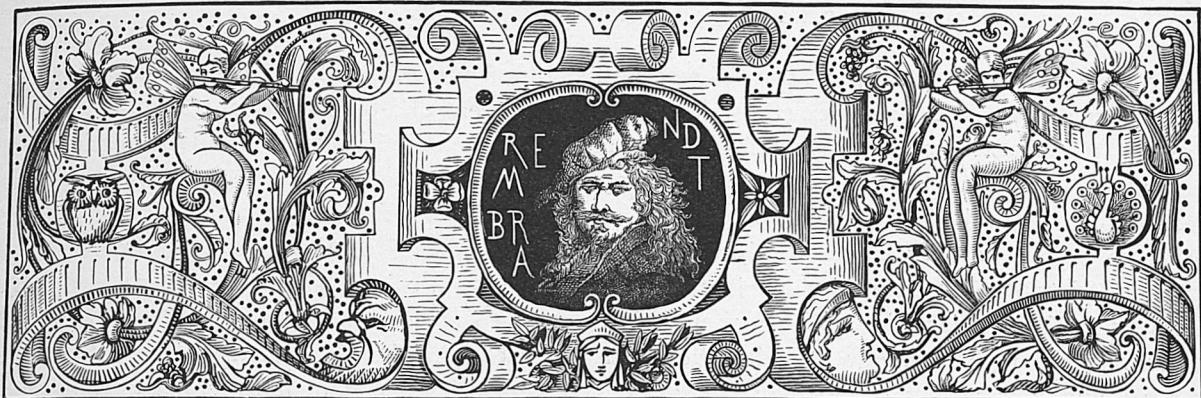
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DESIGNED FOR THE AMERICAN ART REVIEW BY ROBERT D. ANDREWS.

INTRODUCTION.



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HERE have been, and there still are, in our country journals devoted to art and its interests, and we are in no wise to be supposed to ignore their services when we say that none of them have attempted to occupy a position analogous to that held abroad by the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, *L'Art*, the *Portfolio*, and the *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*. The project of founding a periodical similar in character to these celebrated publications has often been discussed in past years, but only to be abandoned. Even those who were most anxious for its appearance felt that it would be imprudent to venture upon such an undertaking until the number of persons directly concerned in art studies, or at least of those deeply interested in the condition and progress of

the arts, had sufficiently increased to give it a reasonable hope of support. This we are inclined to believe is now the case. Within the last ten years a great change has taken place in public sentiment. The arts are no longer regarded as comparatively unimportant to our national growth and dignity, and an ever increasing enthusiasm has replaced languid interest or indifference. Our great cities have their museums, their art schools and lectures; our colleges, their art professors and their collections of casts and pictures; and our libraries, their multiplicity of books upon artistic subjects, whose circulation equals, if it does not surpass, that of books on other topics. A desire to keep up with the times in art matters as in all else, seems to have taken possession of us, and the names and works of Ruskin, Hamerton, Charles Blanc, and Lübke are as familiar to us as to our European brethren. Together with these signs of general interest in art, we have significant evidence of the growth of individual taste in the improved quality of the collections formed by men of wealth, as well as in the number of "Art Galleries" opened in our leading cities, where the dearly bought and hotly disputed paintings of leading European artists find but temporary shelter, so eagerly are they sought for by American amateurs. Nor do these rest content with what is thus brought to their doors, but, crossing the Atlantic, they attend art sales, at which they are so fully recognized as formidable competitors, that, when one of them bids for the best which comes under the hammer at Christie and Manson's, or the Hôtel des Ventes, he is taken as much *au sérieux* as if he were a *milord anglais* or a Russian prince.

All these indications of æsthetic progress on the part of the public would, however, be hardly sufficient to warrant the establishment of a periodical exclusively devoted to art, if art itself had not

made an equal advance amongst us. The earnest study of our artists, at home as well as abroad, is bearing its fruit; and although we still wait for the development of a truly national school,—national in spirit as well as in method,—our faith in its ultimate advent is increased by the gratifying fact that in the matter of technical excellence European critics are constrained to rank many of our artists with the well-known masters of foreign schools. An especially noteworthy sign of artistic progress in this country is the steady development of the art of etching. The publication of a series of plates by American etchers in the REVIEW will, as we hope, aid in fostering the growth of this peculiarly painters' art, which, though born in the seventeenth century, may, by reason of its remarkable revival in our own day, be regarded as equally the child of the nineteenth. The general public is as yet unaware of the excellence already attained in it by some of our most prominent artists, because no periodical hitherto published here has afforded a fitting place for the display of their work. This the AMERICAN ART REVIEW now proposes to do.

An artistic periodical which aims at satisfying present wants should not confine itself solely to the art of the day. Modern society takes a twofold interest in art. No longer content with the enjoyment of it as a spontaneous outgrowth of our higher nature, we have striven to place ourselves outside of and above it, and have called science to our aid, in order that we may study it objectively. The history of art scientifically treated is a department of human knowledge which is hardly a century old, and yet the results already reached are of the highest importance. Through it we have attained an otherwise impossible knowledge of the development of the human race, and many a secret which seemed likely to be forever hidden has been revealed to us; through it the germs of intellectual life have been detected in the rude remains of our remotest ancestors, which have thus been raised from the rank of barbaric curiosities to that of valuable historical documents. This state of things makes it our duty, as it will be our endeavor, to keep our readers fully informed of whatever of interest is brought to light by the active researches now being carried on in all parts of the world.

It may be well to conclude these prefatory remarks with a short statement of the principles which will guide the REVIEW in its critical dealings with contemporary art,—a term which, as we understand it, embraces the works of the architect, the sculptor, and the decorator, as well as those of the painter and designer.

Recognizing that all prominent schools and styles have their excellences and their defects, we shall strive on the one hand to avoid partisanship, and, on the other, to abstain from such indiscriminate commendation as is incompatible with the maintenance of a healthy judgment. The most opposite views on art matters will be welcome to our pages, provided that those who hold them are willing to take the personal responsibility of their opinions, and have, by recognized effort and reflection, established a sufficient claim to be listened to when they undertake to express them.

If by observing these principles the REVIEW should succeed in advancing the cause of art more especially in our own country, its aim will be accomplished to the satisfaction of all who are concerned in its management.

THE EDITORS AND THE PUBLISHERS.

